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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KINSHASA 000876

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [UG](#) [CG](#)

SUBJECT: RUBERWA ACCOUNT OF MAY MEETING WITH UGANDA
PRESIDENT MUSEVENI

Classified By: Ambassador Roger Meece. Reason 1.4 (b/d)

11. (C) Summary: Vice President Ruberwa told the Ambassador that he had a frank but useful exchange in a long meeting with Ugandan President Museveni in Kampala on the margins of the latter's inauguration. Ruberwa said he told Museveni that the GDRC is concerned over continuing reports of Ugandan support for Ituri District militias, unilateral threats to send the UPDF back to the Congo, a recent incursion of UPDF in northern DRC, and the status of rebel militia leaders being held in Uganda. Ruberwa's account suggested something less than a meeting of the minds, but Ruberwa said it is useful to raise these issues periodically with Museveni to help preclude an open confrontation between Kinshasa and Kampala. Ruberwa will urge his colleagues in the GDRC Transition Government to send a senior level representative (not necessarily Ruberwa) to Kampala roughly every three months for a similar discussion. End summary.

12. (C) During a May 24 meeting with Vice President Azarias Ruberwa, the Ambassador asked Ruberwa about his trip to Kampala for the inauguration of Ugandan President Museveni, and the reported long meeting between the two. Speaking from memory, Ruberwa provided an extensive read-out, noting by way of preamble that Museveni is a "complicated" person, and often difficult to read. Later in the conversation, referring to a Museveni denial of support to militias in the DRC, Ruberwa reiterated that he found it difficult to judge exactly what he should believe from Museveni, and what he should question.

13. (C) Ruberwa said that he presented Museveni very frankly four major GDRC concerns. These were continuing reports of arms or other support provided to illegal militias operating in DRC's northeastern Ituri District; negative reactions to Museveni's public threats to send UPDF forces unilaterally into the DRC in pursuit of LRA troops; further concerns about a recent account of UPDF troops inside Congolese territory; and lastly GDRC questions regarding Ugandan intentions regarding six Congolese Revolutionary Movement (MRC) rebel chiefs currently held by Ugandan authorities.

14. (C) According to Ruberwa, Museveni flatly denied that there is continuing Kampala support of Congolese militia groups. Ruberwa said that Museveni added that the last support Uganda had provided to armed groups in the Congo was that given to Jean-Pierre Bemba's MLC, and to combatants associated with Mbusa Nyamwisi. Ruberwa observed that Mbusa was next to him in the same meeting, but did not respond to the Museveni comment. (Note: Mbusa is currently GDRC Regional Affairs Minister under terms of the 2003 Sun City Accord which established the Transition Government. End

note).

15. (C) Ruberwa said Museveni did not respond directly to the concerns about threats to re-enter the DRC, but did say that it was not Ugandan policy to have troops in the DRC. He did not, however, deny the account of UPDF troops found in northeastern DRC (comment: presumably implying the incident was a mistake). Ruberwa said Museveni did comment that the DRC harbors "terrorists", a presumed reference to LRA units reportedly now camped in Garamba National Park on the Sudan border, and possibly as well to Ugandan ADF/NALU rebels who have been attacked by MONUC/GDRC troops in North Kivu province. Ruberwa also observed that Museveni has apparently not repeated any public threats of UPDF troops going to the Congo since the Museveni/Ruberwa meeting.

16. (C) Speaking of the six detained MRC rebel leaders, Museveni reportedly told Ruberwa that Uganda could not extradite these individuals to the DRC, as there is no bilateral extradition treaty between the two countries. Ruberwa, a lawyer, said he did not see the necessity of a treaty; an agreement between the two governments for return of the six should be sufficient. Ruberwa said Museveni raised the possibility of sending the detained leaders to a third country, possibly France. Ruberwa said he pointed out that at least some of the detainees are on a Security Council list, and he doubts any other country would want them. Museveni also reportedly commented that he might free at least one of the six, as Museveni was not convinced he was guilty, or at least a significant figure. Ruberwa said he strongly discouraged any such action. He said he asked Museveni that if extradition is too difficult, why not prosecute the MRC leaders in Uganda under Ugandan law, for example arms violations, since Museveni had already

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acknowledged that the MRC leaders had been found with arms. Per Ruberwa, Museveni seemed discomfited by the question, agreed that this was an interesting suggestion and asked another official present to follow up on the idea.

17. (C) Ruberwa also said in the course of the conversation, Museveni questioned why the DRC had arrested another Ituri militia figure, Thomas Lubanga, and transferred him to the International Criminal Court (ICC). Ruberwa said he presented the facts, including the DRC's interest in cooperating with the ICC, but Museveni was not convinced of the merits of the action.

18. (C) Ruberwa commented that the exchange was useful even if there were many points of disagreement. He said he could not accept all of Museveni's observations. Ruberwa noted, for example, that if all the detained MRC leaders were found with weapons, all inside Ugandan territory, it seemed logical to assume these weapons would find their way to Ituri, in apparent contradiction to Museveni's assertions that there are no further arms flows from Uganda to support Congolese armed groups. In any event, Ruberwa asserted it is good periodically to point out to Museveni that the Congolese are aware of what is going on. The Ambassador asked if Museveni did not know that already. Ruberwa said "maybe," but it seems useful to make it clear. Ruberwa added he believes it important for Kinshasa to send a senior-level person to Kampala to have an exchange with Museveni perhaps every three months to help avoid a major clash between the two governments. He said he would encourage his GDRC colleagues, notably President Kabila, to do exactly that. He added neither Bemba nor Mbusa, former allies of Kampala, would be good choices, but it did not have to be Ruberwa himself who went.

19. (C) Comment: Ruberwa's account of the meeting suggested few areas of agreement with Museveni. Ruberwa the lawyer, however, did not appear angry or upset, speaking in measured tones as he might of an opposing lawyer in a court action with whom he disagreed. He did not appear overly concerned

about the possibility of imminent clashes between Uganda and the DRC. Other elements of the Ruberwa meeting will be covered septel. End comment.

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